



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Office of the Commissioner

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**Commerce Committee Public Hearing  
March 1, 2022**

**Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt  
Testimony in Support Of:**

**HB 5125: An Act Concerning A Study of Economic Development Considerations Related to  
Livestock Processing Facilities in the State**

Senator Hartley, Representative Currey, Senator Martin, Representative Buckbee, and honorable members of the Commerce Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 5125: An Act Concerning a Study of Economic Development Considerations Related to Livestock Processing Facilities in the State. My name is Bryan Hurlburt, and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture.

Connecticut families have been experiencing higher prices for meat over the past several years. While increased demand plays a small role, the price increases are also being driven by a bottleneck in the meat processing industry. When farmers have finished raising their livestock, without adequate processing facilities, farmers had no way to properly slaughter and process their meat.

In Connecticut, all meat and meat products and all poultry and poultry products held or sold in Food Establishments must be inspected under an official regulatory program.

Farmers have the opportunity in Connecticut to sell their live animals to customers who then hire local slaughterhouses to custom slaughter, cut, and wrap meat products. The poultry must not be sold as meat to a spontaneous customer if the buyer of the live bird does not pick up their order. The customer must buy the live animal.

COVID-19 further disrupted an already fragile processing industry in Connecticut. The need and demand for increased processing in the state is at an all time high and without the necessary infrastructure, we cannot support food sustainability for Connecticut residents or the livelihood of Connecticut farmers.

While USDA recently announced significant investments to expand processing capabilities and increase competition in meat and poultry processing in an effort to make agricultural markets more accessible and resilient for farmers, Connecticut is still woefully behind in terms of meeting our processing needs.

The Department would welcome the opportunity to provide support to the Department of Economic and Community Development in their study of the economic development benefits and issues related to livestock processing facilities in the state and furthermore, looks forward to working with the legislature to produce solutions to these issues.



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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. The Departments liaison, Kayleigh Royston can be reached at [Kayleigh.Royston@ct.gov](mailto:Kayleigh.Royston@ct.gov).